

## Chapter 8

# Social Influence, Socialization, and Culture

### Learning Objectives

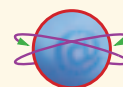
After reading Chapter 8, you should be able to:

- 1 Understand the difference between information dependence and effect dependence.
- 2 Differentiate compliance, identification, and internalization as motives for social conformity.
- 3 Describe the socialization process and the stages of organizational socialization.
- 4 Describe the main methods of socialization and what newcomers can do to socialize themselves.
- 5 Define organizational culture and discuss the contributors to a culture.
- 6 Discuss the assets and liabilities of strong organizational cultures.
- 7 Describe how to diagnose an organizational culture.

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New recruits at Trilogy Software Inc. attend Trilogy University, a kind of corporate boot camp, designed to transform them into creative individuals who can work in teams, adapt to changes, and take risks.



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This description of a successful organization raises a number of interesting questions. Why does Trilogy spend so much time and money on training new hires? Do employees actually accept the ideas and values that they encounter in their training? What is the effect of this type of training on employees' attitudes and behaviour? These are the kinds of questions that we will probe in this chapter.

First, we will examine the general issue of social influence in organizations, how members have an impact on each other's behaviour and attitudes. Social norms hold an organization together, and conformity to such norms is a product of social influence. Thus, the next section discusses conformity. Following this, we consider the elaborate process of socialization, the learning of the organization's norms and roles. Socialization both contributes to and results from the organizational culture, the final topic that we will explore.

## Social Influence in Organizations

In the previous chapter, we pointed out that groups exert influence over the attitudes and behaviour of their individual members. As a result of social influence, people often feel or act differently from how they would as independent operators. What accounts for such influence? In short, in many social settings, and especially in groups, people are highly *dependent* on others. This dependence sets the stage for influence to occur.

### Information Dependence and Effect Dependence

We are frequently dependent on others for information about the adequacy and appropriateness of our behaviour, thoughts, and feelings. How satisfying is this job of mine? How nice is our boss? How much work should I take home to do over the weekend? Should we protest the bad design at the meeting? Objective, concrete answers to such questions might be hard to come by. Thus, we must often rely on information that others provide.<sup>2</sup> In turn, this **information dependence** gives others

#### Information dependence.

Reliance on others for information about how to think, feel, and act.

the opportunity to influence our thoughts, feelings, and actions via the signals they send to us.<sup>3</sup>

Individuals are often motivated to compare their own thoughts, feelings, and actions with those of others as a means of acquiring information about their adequacy. The effects of social information can be very strong, often exerting as much or more influence over others as objective reality.<sup>4</sup>

As if group members were not busy enough tuning into information provided by the group, they must also be sensitive to the rewards and punishments the group has at its disposal. Thus, individuals are dependent on the *effects* of their behaviour as determined by the rewards and punishments provided by others. **Effect dependence** actually involves two complementary processes. First, the group frequently has a vested interest in how individual members think and act because such matters can affect the goal attainment of the group. Second, the member frequently desires the approval of the group. In combination, these circumstances promote effect dependence.

In organizations, plenty of effects are available to keep individual members “under the influence.” Managers typically have a fair array of rewards and punishments available, including promotions, raises, and the assignment of more or less favourable tasks. At the informal level, the variety of such effects available to co-workers is staggering. They might reward cooperative behaviour with praise, friendship, and a helping hand on the job. Lack of cooperation might result in nagging, harassment, name calling, or social isolation.

**Effect dependence.** Reliance on others due to their capacity to provide rewards and punishment.

## Social Influence in Action

One of the most obvious consequences of information and effect dependence is the tendency for group members to conform to the social norms that have been established by the group. In the last chapter, we discussed the development and function of such norms, but we have postponed until now the discussion of why norms are supported. Put simply, much of the information and many of the effects on which group members are dependent are oriented toward enforcing group norms.

### Motives for Social Conformity

The fact that Roman Catholic priests conform to the norms of the church hierarchy seems rather different from the case in which convicts conform to norms that prison officials establish. Clearly, the motives for conformity differ in these two cases. What is needed, then, is some system to classify different motives for conformity.<sup>5</sup>

**Compliance.** **Compliance** is the simplest, most direct motive for conformity to group norms. It occurs because a member wishes to acquire rewards from the group and avoid punishment. As such, it primarily involves effect dependence. Although the complying individual adjusts his or her behaviour to the norm, he or she does not really subscribe to the beliefs, values, and attitudes that underlie the norm. Most convicts conform to formal prison norms out of compliance. Similarly, very young children behave themselves only because of external forces.

**Compliance.** Conformity to a social norm prompted by the desire to acquire rewards or avoid punishment.

**Identification.** Some individuals conform because they find other supporters of the norm attractive. In this case, the individual identifies with these supporters and sees himself or herself as similar to them. Although there are elements of effect dependence here, information dependence is especially important—if someone is basically similar to you, then you will be motivated to rely on them for information about how to think and act. **Identification** as a motive for conformity is often revealed by an imitation process in which established members serve as models for the behaviour of others. For example, a newly promoted executive might attempt to

**Identification.** Conformity to a social norm prompted by perceptions that those who promote the norm are attractive or similar to oneself.

dress and talk like her successful, admired boss. Similarly, as children get older, they might be motivated to behave themselves because such behaviour corresponds to that of an admired parent with whom they are beginning to identify.

**Internalization.** Conformity to a social norm prompted by true acceptance of the beliefs, values, and attitudes that underlie the norm.

**Internalization.** Some conformity to norms occurs because individuals have truly and wholly accepted the beliefs, values, and attitudes that underlie the norm. As such, **internalization** of the norm has happened, and conformity occurs because it is seen as *right*, not because it achieves rewards, avoids punishment, or pleases others. That is, conformity is due to internal, rather than external, forces. In general, we expect that most religious leaders conform to the norms of their religion for this reason. Similarly, the career army officer might come to support the strict discipline of the military because it seems right and proper, not simply because colleagues support such discipline. In certain organizational settings, some of these motives for conformity are more likely than others. For example, in the chapter opening vignette, Lauren Arbittier has accepted the values and attitudes of Trilogy Software. The once cautious spender now considers herself a risk-taker and a member of the exclusive “L2K Club.”

### The Subtle Power of Compliance

In many of the examples given in the previous section, especially those dealing with effect dependence, it is obvious that the doubting group member is motivated to conform only in the *compliance* mode—that is, he or she really does not support the belief, value, and attitude structure underlying the norm but conforms simply to avoid trouble or obtain rewards. Of course, this happens all the time. Individuals without religious beliefs or values might agree to be married in a church service to please others. Similarly, a store cashier might verify a credit card purchase by a familiar customer even though he feels that the whole process is a waste of time. These examples of compliance seem trivial enough, but a little compliance can go a long way.

A compliant individual is necessarily *doing* something that is contrary to the way he or she *thinks* or *feels*. As we pointed out in our discussion of attitudes in Chapter 4, such a situation is highly dissonant and arouses a certain tension in the individual. Now, one way to reduce this dissonance is to cease conformity. This is especially likely if the required behaviour is at great variance with one's values or moral standards. However, this might require the person to adopt an isolate or scapegoat role, equally unpleasant prospects. The other method of reducing dissonance is to gradually accept the beliefs, values, and attitudes that support the norm in question. This is more likely when the required behaviour is not so discrepant with one's current value system.

Consider Mark, an idealistic graduate of a college social work program who acquires a job with a social services agency. Mark loves helping people but hates the bureaucratic red tape and reams of paperwork that is necessary to accomplish this goal. However, to acquire the approval of his boss and co-workers and to avoid trouble, he follows the rules to the letter of the law. This is pure compliance. Over time, however, Mark begins to *identify* with his boss and more experienced co-workers because they are in the enviable position of controlling those very rewards and punishments that are so important to him. Obviously, if he is to *be* one of them, he must begin to think and feel like them. Finally, Mark is promoted to a supervisory position, partly because he is so cooperative. Breaking in a new social worker, Mark is heard to say, “Our rules and forms are very important. You don't understand now, but you will.” The metamorphosis is complete—Mark has *internalized* the beliefs and values that support the bureaucratic norms of his agency.

Although this story is slightly dramatized, the point that it makes is accurate—simple compliance can set the stage for more complete involvement with organiza-



tional norms and roles. The process through which this occurs in organizations is known as *organizational socialization*, the focus of the next section.

## Socialization: Learning and Adjustment

The story of Mark, the social worker, in the previous section describes how one individual was socialized into a particular organization. In the chapter opening vignette, we described how new hires are socialized at Trilogy Software. **Socialization** is the process by which people learn the norms and roles that are necessary to function in a group or organization. It is a learning process in which new members must acquire a variety of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. Socialization is also the primary means by which organizations communicate the organization's culture and values to new members.

An important goal of socialization is to help newcomers assimilate and fit into the organization. There are generally two kinds of fit that are important for socialization. First, newcomers must acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their work tasks and roles. This is known as person–job or P–J fit. **Person–job fit** refers to the match between an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities and the requirements of a job. Second, newcomers must also learn the values and beliefs that are important to the group or organization. This is known as **person–organization fit** or P–O fit and refers to the match between an employee's personal values and the values of an organization.<sup>6</sup>

An important objective of organizational socialization is to achieve high levels of P–J and P–O fit among new members. This is important because research has found that both P–J and P–O fit are strongly related to the work adjustment of new hires. In particular, new hires with greater P–J and P–O fit tend to have more positive job attitudes and are less likely to quit.<sup>7</sup> As so aptly demonstrated in the chapter opening vignette, the socialization of Lauren Arbittier resulted in a very high degree of P–O fit.

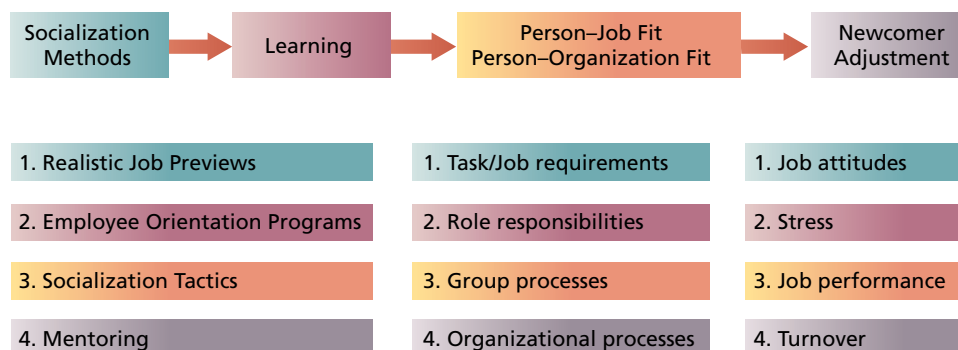
Exhibit 8.1 depicts the socialization process. In particular, it shows how different socialization methods influence learning the task requirements, role responsibilities, and group and organizational processes, and how this leads to P–J and P–O fit. Higher levels of P–J and P–O fit lead to greater socialization and adjustment.

As we shall see, some of this process might occur before organization membership formally begins while some occurs once the new member enters the organization. Furthermore, socialization is an ongoing process by virtue of continuous interaction with others in the workplace. However, there is good reason to believe that socialization is most potent during certain periods of membership transition, such as when one is promoted or assigned to a new work group, and especially when one joins a new organization.<sup>8</sup>

**Socialization.** The process by which people learn the norms and roles that are necessary to function in a group or organization.

**Person–job fit.** The match between an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities and the requirements of a job.

**Person–organization fit.** The match between an employee's personal values and the values of an organization.



**Exhibit 8.1**  
The socialization process.

## Stages of Socialization

Since organizational socialization is an ongoing process, it is useful to divide this process into three stages.<sup>9</sup> One of these stages occurs before entry, another immediately follows entry, and the last occurs after one has been a member for some period of time. In a sense, the first two stages represent hurdles for achieving passage into the third stage (see Exhibit 8.2).

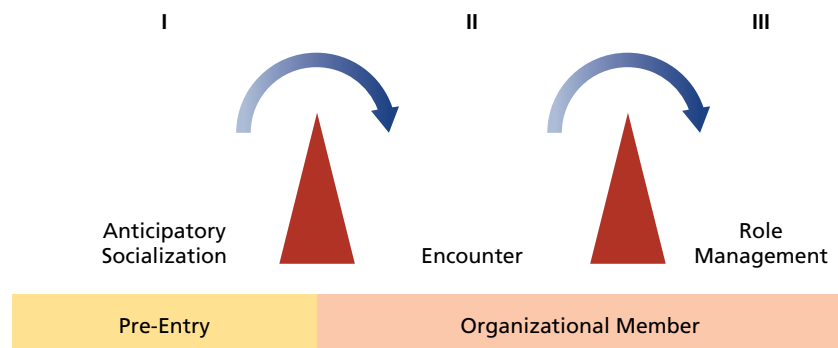
**Anticipatory Socialization.** A considerable amount of socialization might occur even before a person becomes a member of a particular organization. This process is called *anticipatory socialization*. Some anticipatory socialization includes a formal process of skill and attitude acquisition, such as that which might occur by attending college or university. Other anticipatory socialization might be informal, such as that acquired through a series of summer jobs or even by watching the portrayal of organizational life in television shows and movies. As we shall see shortly, organizations vary in the extent to which they encourage anticipatory socialization in advance of entry. As well, not all anticipatory socialization is accurate and useful for the new member.

**Encounter.** In the encounter stage, the new recruit, armed with some expectations about organizational life, encounters the day-to-day reality of this life. Formal aspects of this stage might include orientation programs, training programs (such as that at Trilogy Software), and rotation through various parts of the organization. Informal aspects include getting to know and understand the style and personality of one's boss and co-workers. At this stage, the organization and its experienced members are looking for an acceptable degree of conformity to organizational norms and the gradual acquisition of appropriate role behaviour. At Trilogy Software such behaviours include creativity, working in teams, and risk taking. Recruits, on the other hand, are interested in having their personal needs and expectations fulfilled. If successful, the recruit will have complied with critical organizational norms and should begin to identify with experienced organizational members.

**Role Management.** Having survived the encounter stage and acquired basic role behaviours, the member's attention shifts to fine tuning and actively managing his or her role in the organization. He or she might be expected to exercise some idiosyncrasy credits and modify the role to better serve the organization. This might require forming connections outside the immediate work group. And the organizational member must confront balancing the now-familiar organizational role with nonwork roles and family demands. Each of these experiences provides additional socialization to the role occupant, who might begin to internalize the norms and values that are prominent in the organization.

### Exhibit 8.2 Stages of organizational socialization.

Source: Based on Feldman, D. C. (1976). A contingency theory of socialization. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 21, 433–452. Copyright © 1976 by *Administrative Science Quarterly*. Feldman, D. C. (1981). The multiple socialization of organization members. *Academy of Management Review*, 6, 309–318.



Now that we have seen a basic sketch of how socialization proceeds, let us look in greater detail at some of the key issues in the process.

## Unrealistic Expectations and the Psychological Contract

People seldom join organizations without expectations about what membership will be like and what they expect to receive in return for their efforts. In fact, it is just such expectations that lead them to choose one career, job, or organization over another. Management majors have some expectations about what they will be doing when they become management trainees at IBM. Similarly, even 18-year-old army recruits have notions about what military life will be like. Unfortunately, these expectations are often unrealistic and obligations between new members and organizations are often violated.

**Unrealistic Expectations.** Research indicates that people entering organizations hold many expectations that are inaccurate and often unrealistically high.<sup>10</sup> In one study of telephone operators, for example, researchers obtained people's expectations about the nature of the job *before* they started work. They also looked at these employees' perceptions of the actual job shortly *after* they started work. The results indicated that many perceptions were less favourable than expectations. A similar result occurred for students entering an MBA program.<sup>11</sup> Such changes, which are fairly common, support the notion that socialization has an important impact on new organizational members.

Why do new members often have unrealistic expectations about the organizations they join?<sup>12</sup> To some extent, occupational stereotypes, such as those we discussed in Chapter 3, could be responsible. The media often communicate such stereotypes. For example, a person entering nurses' training might have gained some expectations about hospital life from watching *ER*. Those of us who teach might also be guilty of communicating stereotypes. After four years of study, the new management trainee at IBM might be dismayed to find that the emphasis is on *trainee* rather than *management*! Finally, unrealistic expectations may also stem from overzealous recruiters who paint rosy pictures in order to attract job candidates to the organization. Taken together, these factors demonstrate the need for socialization.

**Psychological Contract.** When people join organizations, they have beliefs and expectations about what they will receive from the organization in return for what they give the organization. Such beliefs form what is known as the psychological contract. A **psychological contract** refers to beliefs held by employees regarding the reciprocal obligations and promises between them and their organization.<sup>13</sup> For example, an employee might expect to receive rewards and promotions in return for hard work and loyalty.

Unfortunately, psychological contract violations appear to be a common occurrence. One study found that 55 percent of recent MBA graduates reported that some aspect of their psychological contract had been broken by their employer.<sup>14</sup> Contract violations occur when an employee perceives that his/her organization has failed to fulfill one or more promised obligations of the psychological contract. This often results in feelings of anger and betrayal and can have a negative effect on employees' work attitudes and behaviour.<sup>15</sup>

Why do psychological contract violations occur? As is the case with unrealistic expectations, recruiters are often tempted to promise more than their organization can provide in order to attract the best job applicants. In addition, newcomers often lack sufficient information to form accurate perceptions concerning their psychological contract. As a result, there will be some incongruence or differences in understandings between an employee and the organization about promised obligations. In addition, organizational changes, such as downsizing and restructuring, can cause

**Psychological contract.** Beliefs held by employees regarding the reciprocal obligations and promises between them and their organization.



organizations to knowingly break promises made to an employee that they are either unable or unwilling to keep.<sup>16</sup>

It is therefore important that newcomers develop accurate perceptions in the formation of a psychological contract. Many of the terms of the psychological contract are established during anticipatory socialization. Therefore, organizations need to ensure that truthful and accurate information about promises and obligations is communicated to new members before and after they join an organization. Incongruence and psychological contract violations are less likely in organizations where socialization is intense.<sup>17</sup> This further points to the need for socialization.

## Methods of Socialization

Organizations differ in the extent to which they socialize their new hires. This is in part due to the fact that some organizations make use of other organizations to help socialize their members. For example, hospitals do not develop experienced cardiologists from scratch. Rather, they depend on medical schools to socialize potential doctors in the basic role requirements of being a physician. Similarly, business firms rely on business schools to send them recruits who think and act in a business-like manner. In this way, a fair degree of anticipatory socialization may exist before a person joins an organization. On the other hand, organizations such as police forces, the military, and religious institutions are less likely to rely on external socializers. Police academies, boot camps, and seminaries are set up as extensions of these organizations to aid in socialization.

Organizations that handle their own socialization are especially interested in maintaining the continuity and stability of job behaviours over a period of time. Conversely, those that rely on external agencies to perform anticipatory socialization are oriented toward maintaining the potential for creative, innovative behaviour on the part of members—there is less “inbreeding.” Of course, reliance on external agents might present problems. The engineer who is socialized in university courses to respect design elegance might find it difficult to accept cost restrictions when he or she is employed by an engineering firm. For this reason, organizations that rely heavily on external socialization always supplement it with formal training and orientation or informal on-the-job training.

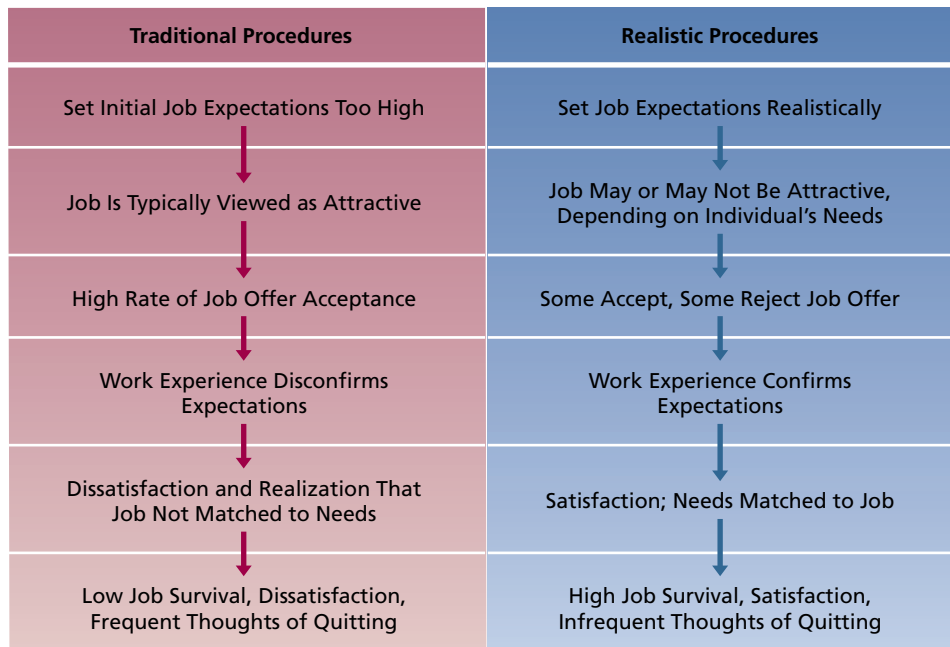
Thus, organizations differ in terms of *who* does the socializing, *how* it is done, and *how much* is done. Most organizations, however, make use of a number of methods of socialization including realistic job previews, employee orientation programs, socialization tactics, and mentoring.

### Realistic Job Previews

We noted earlier that new organizational members often harbour unrealistically inflated expectations about what their jobs will be like. When the job is actually begun, it fails to live up to these expectations, individuals experience “reality shock,” and job dissatisfaction results. As a consequence, costly turnover is most likely to occur among newer employees who are unable to survive the discrepancy between expectations and reality. For the organization, this sequence of events represents a failure of socialization.

Obviously, organizations cannot control all sources of unrealistic job expectations, such as those provided by television shows and glorified occupational stereotypes. However, they *can* control those generated during the recruiting process by providing job applicants with realistic job previews. **Realistic job previews** provide a balanced, realistic picture of the positive and negative aspects of the job to job applicants.<sup>18</sup> Thus, they provide “corrective action” to expectations at the anticipatory socialization stage of socialization. Exhibit 8.3 compares the realistic job pre-

**Realistic job previews.** The provision of a balanced, realistic picture of the positive and negative aspects of a job to job applicants.

**Exhibit 8.3**

Traditional and realistic job previews compared.

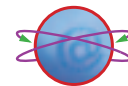
Source: Wanous, J. P. (1975, July–August). Tell it like it is at realistic job previews. *Personnel*, 50–60. © 1975 American Management Association, New York. All rights reserved.

view process with the traditional preview process that often sets expectations too high by ignoring the negative aspects of the job.

How do organizations design and conduct realistic job previews? Generally, they obtain the views of experienced employees and human resource officers about the positive and negative aspects of the job. Then, they incorporate these views into booklets or videotape presentations for applicants.<sup>19</sup> For example, a video presentation might involve interviews with job incumbents discussing the pros and cons of their jobs. Realistic previews have been designed for jobs as diverse as telephone operator, life insurance salesperson, Marine Corps recruit, and supermarket workers.

Sometimes realistic previews use simulations to permit applicants to actually sample the work. For example, in an effort to recruit more women, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) recently staged a five-day recruiting camp for one hundred women who were selected from close to 3,000 applicants interested in a career in policing. During the five-day recruiting camp, the women experienced typical OPP policing activities, including shooting a handgun, completing 6 a.m. fitness drills, and responding to mock crimes. Eighty-three of the women decided to complete the first stage of testing and, if successful, they will then begin a lengthy application and selection process with very realistic expectations.<sup>20</sup>

Evidence shows that realistic job previews are effective in reducing expectations and turnover, and improving job performance.<sup>21</sup> What is less clear is exactly why turnover reduction occurs. Reduced expectations and increased job satisfaction are part of the answer. It also appears that realistic previews cause those not cut out for the job to withdraw from the application process.<sup>22</sup> As a result, applicants who perceive a good P–J and P–O fit are more likely to remain in the hiring process and to accept a job offer. Although the turnover reductions generated by realistic previews are small, they can result in substantial financial savings for organizations.<sup>23</sup> Providing realistic job previews can also help prevent psychological contract violations.<sup>24</sup>



Ontario Provincial Police  
[www.gov.on.ca/opp](http://www.gov.on.ca/opp)

The Ontario Provincial Police staged a five-day recruiting camp in which recruits participated in realistic work simulations.

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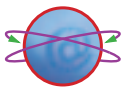
## Employee Orientation Programs

Once newcomers enter an organization, socialization during the encounter stage usually begins with an orientation program. Orientation programs are designed to introduce new employees to their job, the people they will be working with, and the organization. The main content of most orientation programs consists of health and safety issues, terms and conditions of employment, and information about the organization, such as its history and traditions. Another purpose of new employee orientation programs is to begin conveying and forming the psychological contract and to teach newcomers how to cope with stressful work situations.<sup>25</sup>

Most orientation programs take place during the first week of entry and last one day to one week. Some organizations realize the importance of orientation and invest a considerable amount of time and resources in it. Starbucks, for example, has a comprehensive orientation program in which new employees receive 24 hours of training in their first 80 hours of employment. CEO Howard Schultz greets new hires via video and they learn about the company's history and its obsession for quality and customer service. This first phase is followed by classes during the next six weeks on topics such as "Brewing the Perfect Cup," "Retail Sales," "Coffee Knowledge," and "Customer Service." Employees are also taught relaxation techniques and guidelines for on-the-job interpersonal relations. According to CEO Howard Schultz, "For people joining the company we try to define what Starbucks stands for, what we're trying to achieve, and why that's relevant to them." Not surprisingly, the turnover rate at Starbucks is around 60 percent, which is considerably less than the average rate of 150 percent in the specialty-coffee industry.<sup>26</sup>

At Fairmont Hotels and Resorts, the orientation program consists of presentations, role-playing exercises that simulate encounters with guests, and tours that are unique to each hotel and resort. The latter include scavenger hunts that create fun and competition among teams of new hires and celebrity tours that show new employees where famous guests have stayed, such as the hotel in Montreal where John Lennon and Yoko Ono had their "love-in." At a resort in Banff Springs, employees are given a tour of the rooms believed to be haunted by ghosts. After 60 to 90 days on-the-job, new employees are paired with a mentor in order to receive additional help and to build relationships with co-workers.<sup>27</sup>

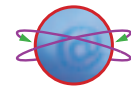
Orientation programs are an important method of socialization because they can have a lasting effect on the job attitudes and behaviours of new hires. A study con-



Fairmont Hotels and Resorts  
[www.fairmont.com](http://www.fairmont.com)

ducted at glass maker Corning Inc. concluded that employees who completed a full orientation program were 69 percent more likely to remain with the company after three years. Other companies have also seen substantial decreases in their rate of turnover as a result of new employee orientation programs.<sup>28</sup>

To learn more about orientation programs, see “Research Focus: *The Effects of an Orientation Program on the Socialization of New Hires*.”



Corning Inc.  
www.corning.com

## Socialization Tactics

Although realistic job previews and orientation programs play an important role in the socialization of new employees, the socialization process does not end at the conclusion of an orientation program. So what happens to new hires once the orientation program has ended? Consider how the new hires at Trilogy Software are socialized. All of them go through their socialization together as a group and attend formal classes at “Trilogy University.” They know that their training will last three months, and they are trained by veterans of the company. Training includes classes in various areas, such as programming languages, product plans, and marketing, followed by group projects that last for three weeks.

As you can see, there is a deliberate, conscious, and structured manner in which the new hires at Trilogy Software are socialized. John Van Maanen and Edgar Schein developed a theory of socialization that helps us understand and explain the socialization process that is used at companies like Trilogy Software. They suggested

### RESEARCH FOCUS

#### The Effects of an Orientation Program on the Socialization of New Hires

Although most organizations use orientation programs to socialize new employees and such programs are believed to play a critical role in the socialization process, very few studies have actually studied their effectiveness as a method of socialization. In an attempt to study the effects of an orientation program on the socialization of new hires, Howard Klein and Natasha Weaver investigated the orientation program in a large educational institution.

Newly hired employees volunteered to attend a three hour orientation program that was designed to help them (1) feel more a part of the organization; (2) learn more about the organization's language, traditions, mission, history, and structure; and (3) better understand the organization's basic workplace principles. The program consisted of an introduction and overview; a videotaped welcome from the company president; a game/exercise to familiarize employees with the company's traditions and language; a videotape and discussion about the mission, history, and structure of the organization; and a lecture/discussion of the organization's basic workplace principles.

The authors expected that employees who attended the orientation program would be more socialized in their knowledge of the organization's history, traditions, customs, myths, stories, and rit-

uals, as well as the language of the organization and its goals and values. Furthermore, it was also expected that if employees were more socialized then they would have higher organizational commitment.

In order to test the effects of the orientation program, a group of newly hired employees completed a survey before the orientation program and one to two months afterward. Some of these employees attended the orientation and some did not. A comparison of those who attended and those who did not indicated that employees who attended the program were more socialized in terms of their knowledge and understanding of the organization's goals and values, history, and involvement with people. Furthermore, employees who attended orientation had higher organizational commitment.

Thus, as predicted, the orientation program increased new employees' learning and socialization, and this led to higher organizational commitment. The authors concluded that orientation programs can help employees become more socialized and can result in greater organizational commitment.

Source: Excerpt from Klein, H. J. & Weaver, N. A. (2000). The effectiveness of an organizational-level orientation training program in the socialization of new hires. *Personnel Psychology*, 53, 47–66. Reprinted with permission.

**Socialization tactics.** The manner in which organizations structure the early work experiences of newcomers.

that there are six **socialization tactics** that organizations can use to structure the early work experiences of newcomers. Each of the six tactics consists of a bipolar continuum and are described below.<sup>29</sup> Exhibit 8.4 depicts the six socialization tactics.

**Collective versus Individual Tactics.** Organizations can use a *collective* or an *individual* socialization tactic. When using the collective tactic, a number of new members are socialized as a group, going through the same experiences and facing the same challenges, as is the case at Trilogy Software. Army boot camps, fraternity pledge classes, and training classes for salespeople and airline attendants are also common examples. In contrast, the individual tactic consists of socialization experiences that are tailor-made for each new member. Simple on-the-job training and apprenticeship to develop skilled craftspeople constitute individual socialization.

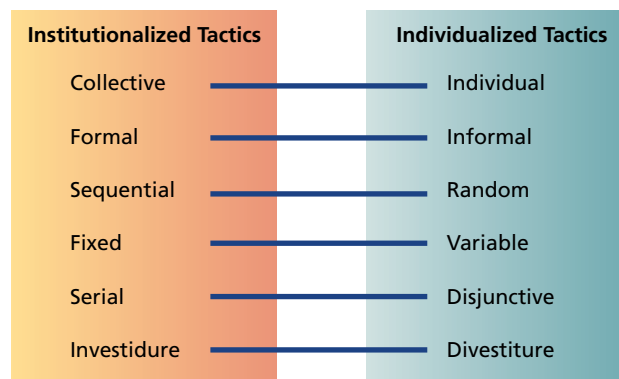
**Formal versus Informal Tactics.** Socialization tactics can also be *formal* or *informal*. Formal tactics involve segregating newcomers from regular organizational members and providing them with formal learning experiences during the period of socialization. Informal tactics, however, do not distinguish a newcomer from more experienced members and rely more on informal and on-the-job learning.

**Sequential versus Random Tactics.** *Sequential* versus *random* tactics have to do with whether there is a clear sequence of steps or stages during the socialization process. With a sequential tactic, there is a fixed sequence of steps leading to the assumption of the role, compared with the random tactic, in which there is an ambiguous or changing sequence.

**Fixed versus Variable Tactics.** Socialization tactics can also be distinguished in terms of the existence of a time frame during which the socialization period lasts. If the socialization tactic is *fixed*, there is a time table for the assumption of the role. For example, at Trilogy Software, the training of new hires lasts for three months. If the tactic is *variable*, then there is no time frame to indicate when the socialization process ends and the newcomer assumes his or her new role.

**Serial versus Disjunctive Tactics.** Socialization tactics also vary in terms of whether or not experienced members of the organization participate in the socialization of new members. The *serial* tactic refers to a process in which newcomers are socialized by experienced members of the organization, as is the case at Trilogy Software. The *disjunctive* tactic refers to a socialization process where role models and experienced organization members do not groom new members or “show them the ropes.”

**Exhibit 8.4**  
Socialization tactics.







Some socialization tactics such as debasement and hazing are designed to strip new members of their old beliefs, values, and attitudes and get them to internalize new ones.

**Investiture versus Divestiture Tactics.** Finally, socialization tactics can be either *investiture* or *divestiture*. Divestiture tactics refer to what is also known as debasement and hazing. This is seen when organizations put new members through a series of experiences that are designed to humble them and strip away some of their initial self-confidence. Debasement is a way of testing the commitment of new members and correcting for faulty anticipatory socialization. Having been humbled and stripped of preconceptions, members are then ready to learn the norms of the organization. An extreme example is the rough treatment and shaved heads of Marine Corps recruits. Sometimes organizations prefer not to use debasement or hazing as part of the socialization of newcomers. Rather, they employ the investiture socialization tactic which affirms the incoming identity and attributes of new hires rather than deny and strip them away. Organizations that carefully select new members for certain attributes and characteristics would be more likely to use this tactic.

**Institutionalized versus Individualized Socialization.** Research on the six socialization tactics has found that they can be grouped into two separate patterns of socialization. *Institutionalized socialization* consists of collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture tactics. *Individualized socialization* consists of individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture tactics. Institutionalized socialization reflects a more structured program of socialization and, as a result, will help reduce newcomers' feelings of uncertainty. On the other hand, individualized socialization reflects a relative absence of structure, and as a result, the early work experiences of newcomers will remain somewhat uncertain.<sup>30</sup>

On the basis of this description, it should be apparent to you that the socialization process at Trilogy Software is highly structured and more institutionalized than individualized. Why do you think that this was the approach used to socialize new hires? Well, just consider the intended outcome of Trilogy's socialization program—creative people who work well in teams, adapt to changes, and take chances. Institutionalized socialization tactics are effective in promoting organizational loyalty, esprit de corps, and uniformity of behaviour among those being socialized. This last characteristic is often very important. No matter where they are in the world, soldiers know whom to salute and how to do it. Similarly, air passengers need not expect any surprises from cabin attendants, thanks to the attendants' institutionalized socialization.

Institutionalized socialization tactics are especially effective in inducing uniform behaviour because there are so many models present who are undergoing the same experience. At Trilogy, new hires are socialized so that their attitudes and behaviour will be consistent with the organization's culture of creativity and risk taking. In addition, the individuals being socialized might pressure each other to toe the line and "do things right." Thus, in institutionalized socialization, one's peers prove to be especially potent sources of information. Just consider the pressure and approval of peers at the roulette table during Trilogy's trip to Las Vegas. This follows from our earlier discussion of conformity.

When socialization is individualized, new members are more likely to take on the particular characteristics and style of their socializers. Thus, two newly hired real estate agents who receive on-the-job training from their bosses might soon think and act more like their bosses than like each other. As you can see, uniformity is less likely under individualized socialization.

Institutionalized socialization is always followed up by some individualized socialization as the member joins his or her regular work unit. For example, rookie police officers are routinely partnered with more experienced officers. At this point, they will begin to develop some individuality in the style with which they perform their jobs. This is certainly likely to be the case for the new hires at Trilogy Software once their three months of socialization and training have ended.

Research on socialization tactics tends to support the basic predictions regarding the effects of institutionalized and individualized socialization on newcomers' roles, attitudes, and behaviour. Institutionalized socialization tactics have been shown to result in lower role ambiguity and conflict, positive job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and lower turnover. Socialization tactics have also been shown to influence person-organization fit, as discussed earlier. In particular, one study found that newcomers who experienced sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture socialization tactics reported more positive P-O fit perceptions, and those with more positive P-O fit perceptions were less likely to quit.<sup>31</sup>

## Mentoring

It should be apparent from our discussion of socialization tactics that supervisors and peers play an important role in the socialization process. While effective relationships between supervisors and their employees obviously influence the socialization and career success of individuals within an organization, one particularly important relationship is that between a newcomer or apprentice and a mentor.

A **mentor** is an experienced or more senior person in the organization who gives a junior person special attention, such as giving advice and creating opportunities to assist him or her during the early stages of his or her career. While someone other than the junior person's boss can serve as a mentor, often the supervisor is in a unique position to provide mentoring. Many research efforts have documented the importance of having a mentor when starting one's career and how it can influence career success.<sup>32</sup> Research on business school graduates has shown that having a mentor early in one's career is associated with increased promotional progress, higher salaries, and more satisfaction with career prospects later in one's career.<sup>33</sup> However, in order for mentors to be effective, they must perform both career and psychosocial functions.

**Career Functions of Mentoring.** A mentor provides many career-enhancing benefits to an apprentice.<sup>34</sup> These benefits are made possible by the senior person's experience, status, knowledge of how the organization works, and influence with powerful people in the organization. The career functions of mentoring include:

- *Sponsorship.* The mentor might nominate the apprentice for advantageous transfers and promotions.

**Mentor.** An experienced or more senior person in the organization who gives a junior person special attention, such as giving advice and creating opportunities to assist him or her during the early stages of his or her career.

- *Exposure and visibility.* The mentor might provide opportunities to work with key people and see other parts of the organization.
- *Coaching and feedback.* The mentor might suggest work strategies and identify strengths and weaknesses in the apprentice's performance.
- *Developmental assignments.* Challenging work assignments a mentor can provide will help develop key skills and knowledge that are crucial to career progress.

**Psychosocial Functions of Mentoring.** Besides helping directly with career progress, mentors can provide certain psychosocial functions that are helpful in developing the apprentice's self-confidence, sense of identity, and ability to cope with emotional traumas that can damage a person's effectiveness. These include:

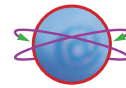
- *Role modelling.* This provides a set of attitudes, values, and behaviours for the junior person to imitate.
- *Acceptance and confirmation.* The mentor can also provide encouragement and support and help the apprentice gain self-confidence.
- *Counselling.* This provides an opportunity to discuss personal concerns and anxieties concerning career prospects, work-family conflicts, and so on.

A recent study on mentoring provided by experienced peers found that both the career and psychosocial functions of mentoring were related to the successful socialization of newcomers, and socialization was negatively related to work stress. In other words, successful socialization was related to less work-related stress. As well, both mentoring functions were related to the amount of help in coping with stress that mentored employees received from their mentors.<sup>35</sup>

Can organizations formally assign mentors to apprentices and achieve the socialization and career benefits normally associated with more spontaneous informal mentor-apprentice relationships? A number of organizations have implemented what they see as very successful formal mentorship programs.<sup>36</sup> For example, Telvent Canada Inc., a Calgary-based company that develops information management systems, started a formal mentoring program five years ago. Although it was originally offered to new hires to help get them up to speed, it is now available to all of the company's 300 employees. Bell Canada recently launched a company-wide online mentor program called Mentor Match that is open to all of its 45,000 employees. The program is available on the company's intranet, and employees must apply to be either a mentor or protégé.<sup>37</sup> Research on such programs concludes that formal programs are nearly as beneficial as informal relationships and are certainly more beneficial than not having mentors at all.<sup>38</sup>

While all mentors, by definition, provide some subset of the career functions, mentors do not always provide these psychosocial functions. A network of close peers can go a long way in providing functions that one's mentor is not able to. People starting their careers should be aware of the importance of these career and psychosocial functions and should attempt to establish a social network that will fulfill them. A mentor relationship is usually a key element in this broader set of relationships. To some extent, a supportive and well-connected social network can substitute for not having an effective mentor.<sup>39</sup>

**Women and Mentors.** One factor that inhibits women's career development, compared with their male counterparts, is the difficulty women have historically faced in establishing an apprentice-mentor relationship with a senior person in the organization.<sup>40</sup> The lack of mentors and role models is a major barrier for the career advancement of many women.<sup>41</sup> The problem goes well beyond the traditional gender stereotyping we discussed in Chapter 3. It stems from the fact that senior people, who are in the best position to be mentors, are frequently men. A young



Telvent Canada Inc.  
www.telvent.com

Bell Canada  
www.bell.ca

woman attempting to establish a productive relationship with a senior male associate faces complexities that the male apprentice does not. Part of the problem is the lack of experience many male mentor candidates have in dealing with a woman in roles other than daughter, wife, or lover. Often, a woman's concerns are going to be different from those her male mentor experienced at that stage in his career. As a result, the strategies that he models might have limited relevance to the female apprentice. Perhaps the greatest complexity is associated with fears that their relationship will be perceived as involving sexual intimacy. Concerns about appearances and what others will say can make both people uncomfortable and get in the way of a productive relationship.

Because of these concerns, the prospective female apprentice faces more constraints than her male counterpart. Research has confirmed that cross-gender mentor-apprentice dyads are less likely to get involved in informal after-work social activities. These activities can help apprentices establish relationships with other influential people in a relaxed setting. Research also confirms that apprentices in a cross-gender dyad are less likely to see their mentor as a role model and, thereby, less likely to realize the developmental benefits of an effective model.<sup>42</sup>

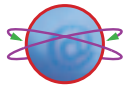
How critical is mentoring to a woman's career? The research evidence suggests that mentoring is even more critical to women's career success than it is to men's. Women who make it to executive positions invariably had a mentor along the way. This is true for half to two-thirds of men executives.<sup>43</sup> Recent studies also indicate that a majority (61 percent) of women have had a mentor, and almost all (99 percent) say that their mentor has had an impact on the advancement of their careers.<sup>44</sup>

Thus, for women with these career aspirations, finding a mentor appears to be a difficult but crucial task. The good news is that an increasing number of organizations are developing mentoring and networking programs. For example, Deloitte has a program called Developing Leaders, in which experienced partners mentor and coach male and female partners who demonstrate leadership potential. Mentors are carefully chosen and their skills and experience are matched to the new partner's goals and aspirations. In addition, women at Deloitte have developed networking and mentoring opportunities for themselves through a program called Women's Business Development Groups. The group organizes networking events and meets with other women's business groups, and an annual Spring Breakfast is held in which prominent women are invited to speak.<sup>45</sup> These kinds of networking opportunities are extremely important because research has found that exclusion from informal networks is one of the major roadblocks to the advancement of women.<sup>46</sup>

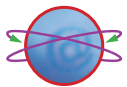
The Bank of Montreal also has a mentoring program as part of its equality and diversity efforts. When the bank asked employees how they could assist women in advancing in their careers, the most important factor suggested by senior women in management was a mentoring program. A formal mentoring program was implemented, and one of the results has been an increasing amount of informal mentoring throughout the bank. In addition, mentored employees have become much more proactive about managing their own careers, something that we discuss later in the chapter.<sup>47</sup>

For women who are unable to find an effective mentor, establishing an informed and supportive social network is a way to obtain some of the career and psychosocial functions we discussed above.

**Race, Ethnicity, and Mentoring.** Limited racial and ethnic diversity at higher levels of organizations constrain the mentoring opportunities available to younger minority group employees. Research shows that mentors tend to select apprentices who are similar to them in terms of race and nationality as well as gender.<sup>48</sup> While there are exceptions, research confirms that minority apprentices in cross-ethnic group mentoring relationships tend to report less assistance, compared with those with same-race mentors.<sup>49</sup>



Deloitte  
www.deloitte.com



Bank of Montreal  
www.bmo.com

Cross-race mentoring relationships seem to focus on instrumental or career functions of mentoring (e.g., sponsorship, coaching, and feedback) and provide less psychosocial support functions (e.g., role modelling, counselling) than is generally seen in same-race dyads.<sup>50</sup> Although the increasing diversity of organizations makes this tendency less problematic, it suggests that minority group members should put extra efforts into developing a supportive network of peers who can provide emotional support and role modelling as well as the career functions. It also means that organizations must do more to provide mentoring opportunities for minority employees just as some have done so for women. One organization that is doing this is IBM, where an Asian Task Force identifies and develops talented Asian employees across North America who might benefit from mentoring.<sup>51</sup>

## Proactive Socialization: What Newcomers Can Do To Socialize Themselves

On the basis of what you have read so far in this chapter, you might have the impression that individuals are at the mercy of organizations to socialize them and help them progress in their careers. This, however, is not the case. You may recall from Chapter 2 that individuals also learn by interacting and observing the behaviour of others and through self-management. You also learned how people with a proactive personality have a tendency to behave proactively and to effect positive change in their environment. Thus, it should not surprise you that newcomers can be proactive in their socialization and in the management of their careers through the use of proactive behaviours. In fact, observation has been found to be one of the most common ways that newcomers learn on the job, and newcomer self-management behaviour has been found to be related to lower anxiety and stress and to a more successful socialization.<sup>52</sup>

**Proactive socialization** refers to the process in which newcomers play an active role in their socialization through the use of a number of proactive tactics. Exhibit 8.5 describes the major types of proactive socialization tactics. One of the most important proactive tactics that newcomers can employ during socialization is to request feedback about their performance and to seek information about their work tasks and roles as well as about their group and organization. Recall that organizational socialization is about learning the attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours that are necessary to function as an effective member of a group and organization. One way for new employees to learn is to seek information from others in the organization.<sup>53</sup>

Newcomers can acquire information by requesting it, by asking questions, and by observing the behaviour of others. In addition, there are different sources that can be used to acquire information such as supervisors, co-workers, mentors, and written documents. However, research has found that newcomers rely primarily on observation, followed by interpersonal sources (i.e., supervisors and co-workers). Furthermore, they tend to seek out task-related information the most, especially during the early period of socialization, followed by role, group, and organization information. Research has also found that feedback and information seeking is related to greater knowledge of different content areas as well as to higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, and adjustment, and lower levels of stress, intentions to quit, and turnover. Furthermore, supervisors are the information source most strongly related to positive socialization outcomes.<sup>54</sup>

In addition to feedback and information seeking, there are a number of other proactive tactics that newcomers can use, such as socializing and building relationships with co-workers, negotiating job changes, career enhancing strategies, involvement in different work-related activities, and finding a mentor.<sup>55</sup> As indicated earlier, having a mentor is extremely important for one's socialization and career development. Thus, new hires should be proactive in finding a mentor if their organization does not have a formal mentoring program.

**Proactive socialization.** The process through which newcomers play an active role in their own socialization through the use of a number of proactive socialization tactics.



### Exhibit 8.5 Proactive socialization tactics.

Sources: Ashford, S. J., & Black, J. S. (1996). Proactivity during organizational entry: The role of desire for control. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81, 199–214; Feij, J. A., Whitely, W. T., Peiro, J. M., & Taris, T. W. The development of career-enhancing strategies and content innovation: A longitudinal study of new workers. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 46, 231–256; Griffin, A. E. C., Colella, A., & Goparaju, S. (2000). Newcomer and organizational socialization tactics: An interactionist perspective. *Human Resource Management Review*, 10, 453–474.

**Feedback-seeking.** Requesting information about how one is performing one's tasks and role.

**Information-seeking.** Requesting information about one's job, role, group and organization.

**Observation.** Observing and modelling the behaviour of appropriate others.

**Behavioural self-management.** Managing one's socialization through self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward, and rehearsal.

**Relationship building.** Initiating social interactions and building relationships with other members of the organization.

**Job change negotiation.** Attempts to change one's job duties or the manner and means by which one performs one's job in order to increase the fit between oneself and the job.

**Involvement in work-related activities.** Participating in "extra-curricular" work-related activities that are work-related but not part of one's job.

**Career-enhancing strategies.** Engaging in behaviours to improve one's career opportunities, such as working on varied tasks and job assignments and seeking additional job responsibilities.

**Informal mentor relationships.** Forming relationships with experienced organization members who act as informal mentors.

One of the primary goals of socialization is to ensure that new employees learn and understand the key beliefs, values, and assumptions of an organization's culture, the topic we now turn to.

## Organizational Culture

The last several pages have been concerned with socialization into an organization. To a large degree, the course of that socialization both depends on and shapes the culture of the organization. Let us examine culture, a concept that has gained the attention of both researchers and practising managers.

### What Is Organizational Culture?

At the outset, we can say that organizational culture is not the easiest concept to define. Informally, culture might be thought of as an organization's style, atmosphere, or personality. This style, atmosphere, or personality is most obvious when we contrast what it must be like to work in various organizations such as IBM, Nortel, WestJet, or the Toronto Blue Jays. Even from their mention in the popular press, we can imagine that these organizations provide very different work environments. Thus, culture provides uniqueness and social identity to organizations.

More formally, **organizational culture** consists of the shared beliefs, values, and assumptions that exist in an organization.<sup>56</sup> In turn, these shared beliefs, values, and assumptions determine the norms that develop and the patterns of behaviour that emerge from these norms. The term *shared* does not necessarily mean that members are in close agreement on these matters, although they might well be. Rather, it means that they have had uniform exposure to them and have some minimum common understanding of them. Several other characteristics of culture are important.

- Culture represents a true "way of life" for organizational members, who often take its influence for granted. Frequently, an organization's culture becomes obvious only when it is contrasted with that of other organizations or when it undergoes changes.

**Organizational culture.** The shared beliefs, values, and assumptions that exist in an organization.

- Because culture involves basic assumptions, values, and beliefs, it tends to be fairly stable over time. In addition, once a culture is well established, it can persist despite turnover among organizational personnel, providing social continuity.
- The content of a culture can involve matters that are internal to the organization or external. Internally, a culture might support innovation, risk taking, or secrecy of information. Externally, a culture might support “putting the customer first” or behaving unethically toward competitors.
- Culture can have a strong impact on both organizational performance and member satisfaction.

Culture is truly a social variable, reflecting yet another aspect of the kind of social influence that we have been discussing in this chapter. Thus, culture is not simply an automatic consequence of an organization’s technology, products, or size. For example, there is some tendency for organizations to become more bureaucratic as they get larger. However, the culture of a particular large organization might support an informal, nonbureaucratic atmosphere.

Can an organization have several cultures? The answer is yes. Often, unique **subcultures** develop that reflect departmental differences or differences in occupation or training.<sup>57</sup> A researcher who studied Silicon Valley computer companies found that technical and professional employees divided into “hardware types” and “software types.” In turn, hardware types subdivided into engineers and technicians, and software types subdivided into software engineers and computer scientists. Each group had its own values, beliefs, and assumptions about how to design computer systems.<sup>58</sup> Effective organizations will develop an overarching culture that manages such divisions. For instance, a widely shared norm might exist that, in effect, says, “We fight like hell until a final design is chosen, and then we all pull together.”

## The “Strong Culture” Concept

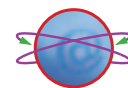
Some cultures have more impact on the behaviour of organizational members than others. In a **strong culture**, the beliefs, values, and assumptions that make up the culture are both intense and pervasive across the organization.<sup>59</sup> In other words, the beliefs, values, and assumptions are strongly supported by the majority of members, even cutting across any subcultures that might exist. Thus, the strong culture provides great consensus concerning “what the organization is about” or what it stands for. In weak cultures, on the other hand, beliefs, values, and assumptions are less strongly ingrained and/or less widely shared across the organization. Weak cultures are thus fragmented and have less impact on organizational members. All organizations have a culture, although it might be hard to detect the details of weak cultures.

To firm up your understanding of strong cultures, let us consider thumbnail sketches of three organizations that are generally agreed to have strong cultures.

- *General Electric*. Under the leadership of former CEO Jack Welch, this industrial giant, based in Fairfield, Connecticut, was transformed from a lethargic and inward-looking company to a fleet-of-foot global competitor with an openness to new ideas. GE became known for extremely high performance standards and its goal to be first or second in the world in all its businesses.
- *WestJet*. Since its inception in 1996, this Calgary-based company has turned a consistent profit in the turbulent airline industry by focusing on low-cost, short-distance flights. WestJet is known for fostering a family atmosphere and a desire to maximize profits that have inspired extremely high employee motivation and commitment. Interestingly, the airline and its culture are modelled after the successful Dallas-based airline, Southwest Airlines.<sup>60</sup>

**Subcultures.** Smaller cultures that develop within a larger organizational culture that are based on differences in training, occupation, or departmental goals.

**Strong culture.** An organizational culture with intense and pervasive beliefs, values, and assumptions.



WestJet  
www.westjet.com

Fun is an essential part of the culture of Flight Centre, where employees attend monthly parties called “buzz nights.”



- *Flight Centre.* Flight Centre is an Australia-based company that has 55 stores and 350 employees in Eastern Canada. The company is known for its youthful and energetic staff and for an egalitarian culture that is also fun and caring. In fact, the company’s annual reports state that “Fun is an essential part of our company.” Monthly parties and thank-you trips are part of a culture that some employees jokingly refer to as a “cult.” The company has been profitable every quarter since September 11, 2001.<sup>61</sup>

Three points are worth emphasizing about strong cultures. First, an organization need not be big to have a strong culture. If its members agree strongly about certain beliefs, values, and assumptions, a small business, school, or social service agency can have a strong culture. Second, strong cultures do not necessarily result in blind conformity. For example, a strong culture at 3M supports and rewards *nonconformity* in the form of innovation and creativity. Finally, General Electric, WestJet, and Flight Centre are obviously successful organizations. Thus, there is a strong belief that strong cultures are associated with greater success and effectiveness. To learn more about the connection between culture and success, see “Applied Focus: *Company’s Beer Commercials Mimic Its Corporate Culture.*”

## Assets of Strong Cultures

Organizations with strong cultures have several potential advantages over those lacking such a culture.

**Coordination.** In effective organizations, the right hand (e.g., finance) knows what the left hand (e.g., production) is doing. The overarching values and assumptions of strong cultures can facilitate such communication. In turn, different parts of the organization can learn from each other and can coordinate their efforts. This is especially important in decentralized, team-oriented organizations.

Comparing the General Motors Saturn organization to established GM divisions provides a good contrast in cultural strength and coordination. Saturn, which has a strong culture oriented toward customer service, received praise from the automotive press for its communication with customers and dealers when inevitable early



### Company's Beer Commercials Mimic Its Corporate Culture

If you think beer commercials depict a phoney world in which young people are having way too much fun, drop by Encore Encore Strategic Marketing Ltd. It not only makes beer commercials. It could pass for one.

Its unique corporate culture—which stresses good times, openness, and a healthy dose of hard work—is one reason the small Toronto agency is reeling in some big accounts, to the chagrin of Canada's advertising establishment.

Several years ago, it scooped the coveted Molson Canadian brand assignment away from MacLaren McCann Canada Inc., which had handled the brand since the sixties.

Encore Encore's head office, in a converted Victorian-style home in Toronto's upscale Yorkville district, looks ordinary enough from the outside. But its modus operandi is unusual, even in the self-conscious advertising world, where agencies wear their coolness as a badge of honour.

How many agencies have a 1976 Airstream trailer parked out back to serve as an extra office? Or a black Labrador named Phoenix who wanders from room to room, sniffing visitors? Or a vice-president of marketing who, apart from bringing his dog to work, looks like he just returned from the beach?

"Here, anything goes from a what-you-wear standpoint. There's not a lot of rules," explains Robert Peters who co-founded the agency in 1993 and sports a polo shirt, shorts, and tennis shoes (minus socks). Mr. Peters, in addition to being a mar-

keter, is an accomplished pianist who plays in Encore Encore's house band and, according to one company employee, asked her to sing along while he played Piano Man on the office piano during her job interview.

"Don't get the idea Encore Encore is all fun and games," says co-founder Brad Weir. "It's very casual, very open, but very get-down serious when business is to be done." Its size (45 employees) and open culture gives it advantages over large agencies, he says. With less bureaucracy, it can react quickly, and clients have access to senior people, not just low-level staffers.

For all the emphasis on fun, employees say 10- or 12-hour days are not uncommon, particularly when big projects come along, such as Molson Canadian. Encore Encore's ads for the beer, which feature the tag line "Here's where we get Canadian," mimic its own culture, offering liberal helpings of young people, rock music, and good times.

Besides its accounts in Canada, Encore Encore does about 25 percent of its work in the United States, for clients such as Molson and Brown-Forman Beverages Worldwide of Louisville, Kentucky, better known as the maker of Jack Daniel's whisky. Encore Encore's owners will not provide precise figures, but they say revenue is between \$5 and \$10 million.

Source: Excerpted from Heinzl, J. (1999, May 26). At Encore, work is like an ad. *The Globe and Mail*, p. M1.

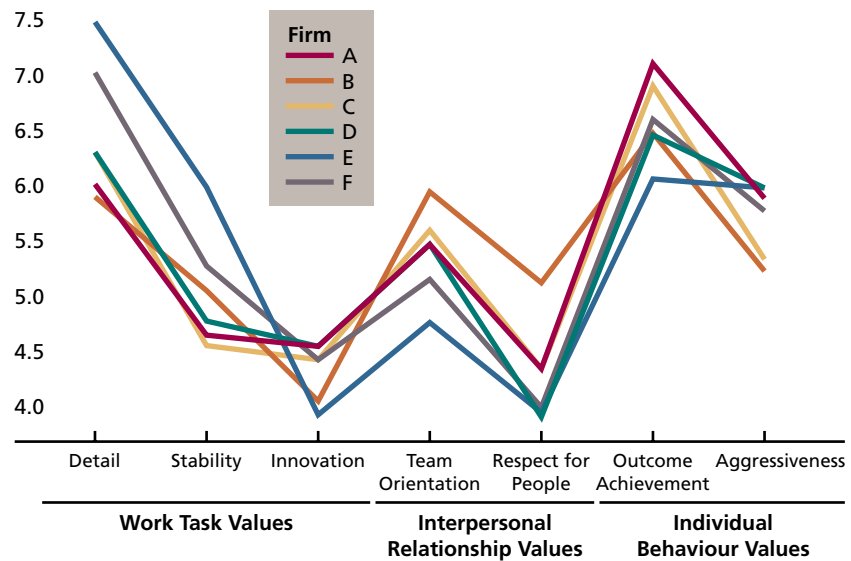
model quality problems cropped up. When quality problems arose with the new Chevy Camaro and Pontiac Firebird, GM received praise for not shipping defective cars, but it was criticized for not communicating well with customers and dealers.<sup>62</sup> Ironically, GM developed Saturn, in part to serve as a cultural model for the established GM divisions that have long had rather fragmented cultures.

**Conflict Resolution.** You might be tempted to think that a strong culture would produce strong conflicts within an organization—that is, you might expect the intensity associated with strongly held assumptions and values to lead to friction among organizational members. There might be some truth to this. Nevertheless, sharing core values can be a powerful mechanism that helps to ultimately resolve conflicts—a light in a storm as it were. For example, in a firm with a core value of fanatical customer service, it is still possible for managers to differ about how to handle a particular customer problem. However, the core value will often suggest an appropriate dispute resolution mechanism—"Let's have the person who is closest to the customer make the final decision."

**Financial Success.** Does a strong culture pay off in terms of dollars and cents—that is, do the assets we discussed above get translated into bottom-line financial success? The answer seems to be yes, as long as the liabilities discussed below can be avoided.

**Exhibit 8.6**  
Scores on organizational  
culture values across six  
accounting firms.

Source: Sheridan, J. E. (1992).  
Organizational culture and employee  
retention. *Academy Management  
Journal*, 35, 1036–1056.



One study of insurance companies found that firms whose managers responded more consistently to a culture survey (thus indicating agreement about the firm's culture) had greater asset and premium growth than those with disagreement.<sup>63</sup> Another study had members of six international accounting firms complete a value survey, the results of which you see in Exhibit 8.6. Because all firms were in the same business, there is some similarity to their value profiles (e.g., attention to detail is valued over innovation). However, close inspection shows that the six firms actually differ a good deal in their value profiles. Firms E and F tended to emphasize the work task values of detail and stability and to deemphasize a team orientation and respect for people. Comparatively, firms A, B, and C tended to emphasize these interpersonal relationship values. The author determined that firms E and F had much higher employee turnover rates, a fact that was estimated to cost each between \$6 and \$9 million a year, compared with firms A, B, and C.<sup>64</sup>

There is growing consensus that strong cultures contribute to financial success and other indicators of organizational effectiveness *when the culture supports the mission, strategy, and goals of the organization*.<sup>65</sup> A good example of this is the discount airline WestJet. A key aspect of WestJet's corporate culture is a universal desire to maximize profits. The company has not only become one of the most profitable airlines in North America, but it is also the most successful low-cost carrier in Canadian history. According to company CEO Clive Beddoe, WestJet's corporate culture is the primary reason for its extraordinary performance. "The entire environment is conducive to bringing out the best in people" he says, "It's the culture that creates the passion to succeed."<sup>66</sup>

## Liabilities of Strong Cultures

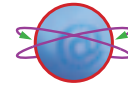
On the other side of the coin, strong cultures can be a liability under some circumstances.

**Resistance to Change.** The mission, strategy, or specific goals of an organization can change in response to external pressures, and a strong culture that was appropriate for past success might not support the new order—that is, the strong consensus about common values and appropriate behaviour that makes for a strong culture can prove to be very resistant to change. This means that a strong culture can damage a firm's ability to innovate.



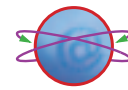
An excellent example is the case of IBM. A strong culture dedicated to selling and providing excellent service for mainframe computers contributed to the firm's remarkable success. However, this strong culture also bred strong complacency that damaged the company's ability to compete effectively with smaller, more innovative firms. IBM's strong mainframe culture limited its competitiveness in desktop computing, software development, and systems compatibility.

Another good example is the sales culture of software giant Oracle Corporation, which has been described as hyper-aggressive and tough-as-nails—the toughest ever seen in the industry. Oracle salespeople have been accused of using brute-force tactics, heavy-handed sales pitches, and even routinely running roughshod over customers. Although the culture was once the envy of the industry and the major reason Oracle became the world's second-largest software company, the industry has changed and now the culture has been described as its own worst enemy. CEO Larry Ellison is trying to change the company's aggressive sales culture, and one of the first things he did was eliminate a long-established incentive system that encouraged furious sales pushes, over-promising, and steep discounts.<sup>67</sup>



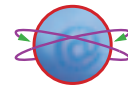
Oracle Corporation  
www.oracle.com

**Culture Clash.** Strong cultures can mix as badly as oil and water when a merger or acquisition pushes two of them together under the same corporate banner.<sup>68</sup> Both General Electric and Xerox, large organizations with strong cultures of their own, had less than perfect experiences when they acquired small high-technology Silicon Valley companies with unique cultures. The merger of BankAmerica and Security Pacific resulted in a particularly strong culture clash. In each of these cases, the typical scenario concerns a freewheeling smaller unit confronting a more bureaucratic larger unit.



Security Pacific  
www.securitypacific.com

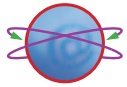
The recent merger of Hewlett-Packard and Compaq also raised concerns about a culture clash given the different work habits, attitudes, and strategies of the two companies. For example, Hewlett-Packard is known for careful, methodical decision making while Compaq has a reputation for moving fast and correcting mistakes later. Hewlett-Packard is engineering-oriented and Compaq is sales-oriented. The merger involved a vicious battle inside Hewlett-Packard that has been described as a corporate civil war. Now that the companies have merged, employees who were once rivals will have to work together and learn new systems. They will have to resolve culture clashes and overcome the fact that more often than not, high-tech mergers fail. This, however, is nothing new to Compaq. The company experienced a culture clash when it merged with Digital Equipment Corp. in 1998. Many of the promised benefits did not materialize, product decisions were not made quickly or were changed, and confused customers took their business elsewhere.<sup>69</sup>



Compaq  
www.compaq.com

**Pathology.** Some strong cultures can threaten organizational effectiveness simply because the cultures are, in some sense, pathological.<sup>70</sup> Such cultures may be based on beliefs, values, and assumptions that support infighting, secrecy, and paranoia, pursuits that hardly leave time for doing business. The collapse of Enron has been blamed in part on a culture that valued lies and deception rather than honesty and truths, and the collapse of WorldCom has been attributed to a culture of secrecy and blind obedience in which executives were encouraged to hide information from directors and auditors and told to simply follow orders. The use of unethical and fraudulent accounting practices was part and parcel of both cultures.<sup>71</sup> To get a better idea of the effect of a pathological culture on an organization, consider this example of an unsuccessful semiconductor firm whose culture exhibited considerable paranoia.

The two founders took all kinds of precautions to prevent their ideas from being stolen. They fragmented jobs and processes so that only a few key people in the company really understood the products. They rarely subcontracted work. And they paid employees very high salaries to give them an incentive to stay with the



NASA  
www.nasa.gov

firm. These three precautions combined to make Paratech's costs among the highest in the industry.<sup>72</sup>

Another example of a pathological culture is NASA's culture of risk-taking. Although the cause of the fatal crash of the Columbia space shuttle in February of 2003 was a chunk of foam about the size of a briefcase, the root cause was NASA's culture that downplayed space-flight risks and suppressed dissent. A report by the Columbia Accident Investigation Board concluded that "NASA's organizational culture had as much to do with this accident as foam did." The report indicated that the culture of NASA has sacrificed safety in the pursuit of budget efficiency and tight schedules. One of the Board's recommendations was that the "self-deceptive" and "overconfident" culture be changed.<sup>73</sup>

## Contributors to the Culture

How are cultures built and maintained? In this section, we consider two key factors that contribute to the foundation and continuation of organizational cultures. Before continuing, please consult You Be the Manager.

**The Founder's Role.** It is certainly possible for cultures to emerge over time without the guidance of a key individual. However, it is remarkable how many cultures, especially strong cultures, reflect the values of an organization's founder.<sup>74</sup> The imprint of Walt Disney on the Disney Company, Sam Walton on Wal-Mart, Ray Kroc on McDonald's, Thomas Watson on IBM, Frank Stronach on Magna International, and Bill Gates on Microsoft is obvious. As we shall see shortly, such imprint is often kept alive through a series of stories about the founder passed on to successive generations of new employees. This provides continuing reinforcement of the firm's core values.

In a similar vein, most experts agree that top management strongly shapes the organization's culture. The culture will usually begin to emulate what top management "pays attention to." For example, the culture of IBM today is much different than it was under the leadership of Thomas Watson who created a culture that reflected his own personality. Louis Gerstner Jr., who took over as CEO in 1993 until his retirement in 2002, made diversity a top priority. As a result, the culture of IBM became a more people-friendly one in which individuals are valued more for

CEO Frank Stronach of Magna International is a classic example of a founder whose values have shaped the organization's culture.



# You Be the Manager

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How does the Walt Disney Company attract and retain service employees and maintain excellent customer service?

The Walt Disney Company empire includes the Disney Studios, Disneyland Resort in California, the Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, and a lucrative licensing arrangement for products based on Disney characters. There is universal agreement that Disney has been successful, especially in its theme parks and associated resorts, by virtue of an unwavering dedication to excellent customer service.

By all appearances, the task does not seem easy. The workforce is mostly young and not especially well paid. They are particularly likely to be scheduled to work on busy holidays and vacation periods, just when they would like to spend time with friends and family. Much of the work itself is basically routine and boring (try uttering “Welcome, Voyager” with conviction thousands of times a day to the hordes who visit Space Mountain!). Also, Disney has some of the most rigid grooming standards in the industry, forbidding beards, mustaches, and dangling jewellery. The company even provides samples of which basic black shoes are acceptable. The image here is clean-cut and conservative.

If individuality is discouraged, all-American friendliness is encouraged. Employees are expected to be friendly, polite, courteous, and helpful when they are in the presence of customers. They are told that they are players in a live performance and are part of a show in the Magic Kingdom. And all employees are responsible for making the park guests feel welcomed, special, and happy.

## Maintaining the Culture at the Magic Kingdom

Customers must feel that they are in a magical place that is the most wonderful place in the world.

Disney relies heavily on promotion from within, even in its management ranks. Its white-collar turnover is low by any standard, and its turnover rate is well below average for hourly service employees. Disney has been so successful that firms such as General Motors and DuPont have sent executives to Disney-sponsored seminars to understand how Disney has managed to provide guests with such a clean, pleasant, friendly environment for all these years.

So, how does The Walt Disney Company attract and retain service employees despite low pay, curtailed individuality, rigorous rules, and fairly routine work while maintaining excellent customer service? According to some people at Disney, a magic ingredient called “pixie dust” inspires employees to provide first-rate customer service. You be the manager.

### Questions

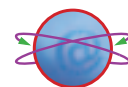
1. Is it possible for companies like The Walt Disney Company to find employees who will be dedicated and committed to a strong corporate culture like Disney's? How can The Walt Disney Company make sure that the people they hire will buy into the Disney culture?
2. Is it sufficient to hire the right people at Disney and then expect them to live up to the company's values and provide excellent customer service? What else should Disney do after employees have been hired to ensure that they are dedicated and committed to the Disney philosophy?

To find out Disney's secret, see The Manager's Notebook at the end of the chapter.

Sources: Blocklyn, P. L. (1988, December). Making magic: The Disney approach to people management. *Personnel*, pp. 28–35; Burka, P. (1988, November 8). What they teach you at Disney U. *Fortune*, Special advertising section; Solomon, C. M. (1989, December). How does Disney do it? *Personnel*, 50–57; Van Maanen, J. V., & Kunda, G. (1989). “Real feelings”: Emotional expression and organizational culture. *Research in Organizational Behaviour*, 11, 43–103.

their unique traits, skills, and contributions—a sharp contrast to the culture of conformity under the leadership of Thomas Watson. Today, IBM is regarded as a leader in workplace diversity.<sup>75</sup>

Sometimes, the culture begun by the founder can cause conflict when top management wishes to see an organization change directions. At Apple Computer,



Apple Computer  
www.apple.com

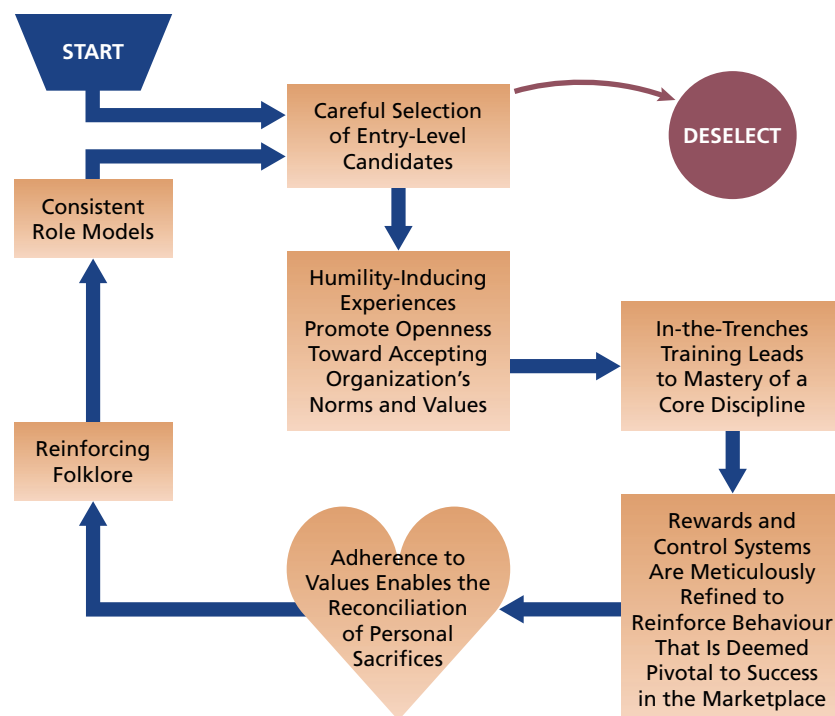
Steven Jobs nurtured a culture based on new technology and new products—innovation was everything. When top management perceived this strategy to be damaging profits, it introduced a series of controls and changes that led to Jobs' resignation as board chair.<sup>76</sup> At Oracle, where attempts are being made to change the company's aggressive sales culture, many people who are familiar with the company believe that to change the culture they must also change the CEO.

**Socialization.** The precise nature of the socialization process is a key to the culture that emerges in an organization because socialization is one of the primary means by which individuals can learn the culture's beliefs, values, and assumptions. Weak or fragmented cultures often feature haphazard selection and a nearly random series of job assignments that fail to present the new hire with a coherent set of experiences. On the other hand, Richard Pascale of Stanford University notes that organizations with strong cultures go to great pains to expose employees to a careful step-by-step socialization process (Exhibit 8.7).<sup>77</sup>

- **Step 1—Selecting Employees.** New employees are carefully selected to obtain those who will be able to adapt to the existing culture, and realistic job previews are provided to allow candidates to deselect themselves (a process known as *self-selection*). As an example, Pascale cites Procter & Gamble's series of individual interviews, group interviews, and tests for brand management positions.
- **Step 2—Debasement and Hazing.** Debasement and hazing provoke humility in new hires so that they are open to the norms of the organization.
- **Step 3—Training “in the Trenches.”** Training begins “in the trenches” so that employees begin to master one of the core areas of the organization. For example, even experienced M.B.A.s will start at the bottom of the professional ladder to ensure that they understand how *this* organization works. At Lincoln Electric, an extremely successful producer of industrial products, new M.B.A.s literally spend eight weeks on the welding line so that they truly come to understand and appreciate Lincoln's unique shopfloor culture. At Trilogy

**Exhibit 8.7**  
Socialization steps in strong cultures.

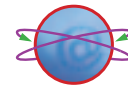
Source: From Pascale, R. The paradox of “corporate culture”: Reconciling ourselves to socialization. Copyright © 1985, by The Regents of the University of California. Reprinted from the *California Management Review*, Vol. 27, No. 2. By permission of The Regents.



Software, the company chair dedicates three months to training new employees so they can learn to become creative risk-takers.

- **Step 4—Reward and Promotion.** The reward and promotion system is carefully used to reinforce those employees who perform well in areas that support the goals of the organization.
- **Step 5—Exposure to Core Culture.** Again and again, the culture's core beliefs, values, and assumptions are asserted to provide guidance for member behaviour. This is done to emphasize that the personal sacrifices required by the socialization process have a true purpose.
- **Step 6—Organizational Folklore.** Members are exposed to folklore about the organization, stories that reinforce the nature of the culture. We examine this in more detail below.
- **Step 7—Role Models.** Identifying people as “fast-trackers” provides new members with role models whose actions and views are consistent with the culture. These role models serve as tangible examples for new members to imitate.

Pascale is careful to note that it is the *consistency* among these steps and their mutually reinforcing properties that make for a strong culture. Given that they are socializing theme park employees rather than rocket scientists, it is remarkable how many of these tactics the Disney company (profiled earlier in the You Be the Manager feature) uses. Selection is rigorous, and grooming standards serve as mild debasement. Everyone begins at the bottom of the hierarchy. Pay is low, but promotion is tied to performance. Folklore stresses core values (“Walt’s in the park.”). Better performers serve as role models at Disney University or in paired training. At Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, where the company wants new employees to buy into the team philosophy and a “service mindset,” all new hires from hotel managers to dishwashers go through four interviews during the selection process and once hired they enter a three-month socialization program.<sup>78</sup>



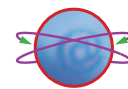
Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts  
www.fourseasons.com

## Diagnosing a Culture

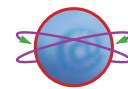
Earlier, we noted that culture represents a “way of life” for organizational members. Even when the culture is strong, this way of life might be difficult for uninitiated outsiders to read and understand. One way to grasp a culture is to examine the symbols, rituals, and stories that characterize the organization’s way of life. For insiders, these symbols, rituals, and stories are mechanisms that teach and reinforce the culture.

**Symbols.** At the innovative Chaparral Steel Company in Texas, employees have to walk through the human resources department to get to their lockers. Although this facilitates communication, it also serves as a powerful symbol of the importance that the company places on its human resources. For years, IBM’s “respect for the individual” held strong symbolic value that was somewhat shaken with its first-ever layoffs. Such symbolism is a strong indicator of corporate culture.<sup>79</sup>

Some executives are particularly skilled at using symbols consciously to reinforce cultural values. CEO Carl Reichardt of Wells Fargo is known as a fanatic cost cutter. According to one story, Reichardt received managers requesting capital budget increases while sitting in a tatty chair. As managers made their cases, Reichardt picked at the chair’s exposed stuffing, sending a strong symbolic message of fiscal austerity. This was in case they had missed the message conveyed by having to pay for their own coffee and their own office Christmas decorations!<sup>80</sup>



Chaparral Steel  
www.chaparralsteel.com



Wells Fargo  
www.wellsfargo.com

**Rituals.** Observers have noted how rites, rituals, and ceremonies can convey the essence of a culture.<sup>81</sup> For example, at Tandem, a California computer company, Friday afternoon “popcorn parties” are a regular ritual. (For years, these parties were called “beer busts.” We will leave it up to you to decide whether this change

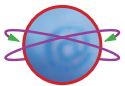


of names is symbolic of a major cultural shift!) The parties reinforce a “work hard, play hard” atmosphere and reaffirm the idea that weekly conflicts can be forgotten. The Disney picnics, beach parties, and employee nights are indicative of a peer-oriented, youth-oriented culture. At Flight Centre, the monthly parties called “buzz nights,” at which employees are recognized for their accomplishments, are indicative of a youthful, energetic, and fun culture. At Mary Kay Cosmetics, elaborate “seminars” with the flavour of a Hollywood premiere combined with a revival meeting are used to make the sales force feel good about themselves and the company. Pink Cadillacs and other extravagant sales awards reinforce the cultural imperative that any Mary Kay woman can be successful. Rituals need not be so exotic to send a cultural message. In some companies, the annual performance review is an act of feedback and development. In others, it might be viewed as an exercise in punishment and debasement.

**Stories.** As we noted earlier, the folklore of organizations—stories about past organizational events—is a common aspect of culture. These stories, told repeatedly to successive generations of new employees, are evidently meant to communicate “how things work,” whether they are true, false, or a bit of both. Anyone who has spent much time in a particular organization is familiar with such stories, and they often appear to reflect the uniqueness of organizational cultures. However, research indicates that a few common themes underlie many organizational stories.

- Is the big boss human?
- Can the little person rise to the top?
- Will I get fired?
- Will the organization help me when I have to move?
- How will the boss react to mistakes?
- How will the organization deal with obstacles?<sup>82</sup>

Issues of equality, security, and control underlie the stories that pursue these themes. Also, such stories often have a “good” version, in which things turn out well, and a “bad” version, in which things go sour. For example, there is a story that Ray Kroc, McDonald’s founder, cancelled a franchise after finding a single fly in the restaurant.<sup>83</sup> This is an example of a sour ending to a “how will the boss react to mistakes?” story. Whether the story is true or not, its retelling is indicative of one of the core values of the McDonald’s culture—a fanatical dedication to clean premises.



McDonald's  
www.mcdonalds.com

## the manager's Notebook

### Maintaining the Culture at the Magic Kingdom

The Walt Disney Company is an excellent example of how an organization effectively communicates and instills its cultural values. Disney does this through an extensive selection process and an elaborate socialization and training program.

1. Before employees even begin to learn about the Disney way, they must pass through a rigorous selection process. Every applicant for an hourly job at Disney is given an eight-to-ten minute preliminary interview. Because Disney's strong corporate culture is not for everyone, a film is shown to warn job candidates about Disney expectations and the standards of grooming and behaviour. Realistic job previews are used to ensure that new hires have realistic expectations about the work. Applicants who accept Disney's conditions of employment and pass the preliminary interview are then given a 45-minute job interview. Elaborate group selection interviews stress attitudes and personality over academic credentials. During busy periods of the year, such as Christmas and summer vacations, employees from different areas of Disney assist in the hiring of temporary employees. For salaried employees, internal promotion is used to fill 60 to 80 percent of positions, and a very careful and elaborate selection process is used to fill the remaining 20 to 40 percent.
2. Once job applicants are accepted for a job at The Walt Disney Company, they attend "Disney

University" and take the Traditions course, which exposes them to the lingo and lore of Disney. In the Disney vocabulary, they are hosts or cast members, not employees, and customers are guests. Similarly, their uniforms are costumes, and they are "on stage" when they are in the public part of the park. There are group tests ("Name the Seven Dwarfs in Snow White") to foster teamwork. Cast members learn that their role in making people happy includes picking up any stray trash and being able to answer any conceivable question a guest asks. When everyone does this, employees serve as role models for each other. After the group training at Disney U., employees are assigned to experienced peers who train them in the techniques of their specific job assignment. This "paired training," along with the Traditions class, is much more extensive than is typical in most service organizations. Thus, guests have little reason to expect poor performance from a new cast member, who has been well versed in Disney's values regarding family entertainment. Cast members who demonstrate outstanding service and the traditional Disney values are acknowledged with company and division awards. In the old days, the cry "Walt's in the park" would motivate cast members to do their very best. Today, Disney U. trainers often exhort students with "Walt's always in the park now." The spirit lives.

## Learning Objectives Checklist

1. There are two basic forms of social dependence. Information dependence means that we rely on others for information about how we should think, feel, and act. Effect dependence means that we rely on rewards and punishments provided by others. Both contribute to conformity to norms.
2. There are several motives for conformity to social norms. One is compliance, in which conformity occurs mainly to achieve rewards and avoid punish-

ment. It is mostly indicative of effect dependence. Another motive for conformity is identification with other group members. Here, the person sees himself or herself as similar to them and relies on them for information. Finally, conformity may be motivated by the internalization of norms, and the person is no longer conforming simply because of social dependence.

3. Socialization is the process by which people learn the norms and roles that are necessary to function in a group or organization. It is a process that involves learning about one's tasks, roles, group, and organi-

zation, and achieving high levels of person–job and person–organization fit. Organizational members learn norm and role requirements through three stages of socialization: anticipatory, encounter, and role management.

4. Realistic job previews can help new members cope with initial unrealistic expectations. Orientation programs introduce new employees to their job, the people they will be working with, and the organization. Institutionalized socialization reflects a structured program of socialization and will help reduce newcomers' feelings of uncertainty. Individualized socialization reflects a relative absence of structure and the early work experiences of newcomers will be more uncertain. Mentors can assist new members during socialization and influence their career success by performing career and psychosocial functions. New members can play an active role in their socialization through the use of proactive socialization tactics.
5. Organizational culture consists of the shared beliefs, values, and assumptions that exist in an organization. Subcultures can develop that reflect departmental or occupational differences. In strong cultures, beliefs, values, and assumptions are intense, pervasive, and supported by consensus. An organization's founder and its socialization practices can strongly shape a culture.
6. The assets of a strong culture include good coordination, appropriate conflict resolution, and financial success. Liabilities of a strong culture include inherent pathology, resistance to change, and culture clash when mergers or acquisitions occur.
7. Symbols, rituals, and stories are often useful for diagnosing a culture.

## Discussion Questions

1. Compare and contrast information dependence with effect dependence. Under which conditions should people be especially information dependent? Under which conditions should people be especially effect dependent?
2. Describe an instance of social conformity that you have observed in an organizational setting. Did compliance, identification, or internalization motivate this incident? Were the results beneficial for the organization? Were they beneficial to the individual involved?
3. Consider how you were socialized into the college or university where you are taking your organiza-

tional behaviour course. Did you have some unrealistic expectations? Where did your expectations come from? What outside experiences prepared you for college or university? Are you experiencing institutionalized or individualized socialization? What are some proactive socialization tactics that you can employ to facilitate your socialization?

4. What are the pros and cons of providing realistic job previews for a job that is objectively pretty bad?
5. Imagine that you are starting a new business in the retail trade. You are strongly oriented toward providing excellent customer service. What could you do to nurture a strong organizational culture that would support such a mission?
6. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of developing a strong organizational culture and some socialization practices that you would recommend for building a strong organizational culture.
7. Describe how you would design a new employee orientation program. Be sure to indicate the content of your program and what knowledge and information employees will acquire from attending the program. What are some of the outcomes that you would expect from your orientation program?

## Integrative Discussion Questions

1. What are the implications of social learning theory for social influence and socialization? Discuss the practical implications of each component of social learning theory (i.e., modelling, self-efficacy, and self-management) for the socialization of new organization members. Describe how you would design an orientation program for new employees based on social learning theory.
2. Refer to the models of attitude change described in Chapter 4. What are the implications of each model for changing an organization's culture? If you wanted to change the culture of an organization, what would be the best approach?

## Experiential Exercise

### The Organizational Culture—Values Survey

The purpose of the Organizational Culture–Values Survey is for you to learn about those values that are most important to you and to develop a values profile of yourself. You can also compare your values with those of a current or previous organization where you were employed. By comparing the rank-

## 00 FLASHBACK

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ings of each list you can determine the degree of person-organization fit between your values and those of the organization.

First, rank the values in the order of most importance to you. Place the number 1 next to the value you feel is most important and the number 16 next to the one you think is

least important. Then number the second and fifteenth and so on. Second, do the same thing for your current organization if you are employed or the most recent organization where you were last employed.

Your Values	Organizational Values	Difference
_____ Ambition	_____ Ambition	_____
_____ Broadmindedness	_____ Broadmindedness	_____
_____ Competence	_____ Competence	_____
_____ Cheerfulness	_____ Cheerfulness	_____
_____ Cleanliness	_____ Cleanliness	_____
_____ Courage	_____ Courage	_____
_____ Helpfulness	_____ Helpfulness	_____
_____ Honesty	_____ Honesty	_____
_____ Imagination	_____ Imagination	_____
_____ Independence	_____ Independence	_____
_____ Intelligence	_____ Intelligence	_____
_____ Obedience	_____ Obedience	_____
_____ Politeness	_____ Politeness	_____
_____ Responsibility	_____ Responsibility	_____
_____ Self-control	_____ Self-control	_____
_____ Tolerance	_____ Tolerance	_____

### Scoring and Interpretation

Compare your values profile to the values orientation of your organization. For each value, calculate the difference between the two rankings in the space indicated, and then calculate a total difference score. A small difference indicates a better person-organization fit between your values and those of your organization. Large differences indicate a lack of person-organization fit or a mismatch. Research indicates that a good person-organization fit between an employee's values and those of the organization is positively related to job attitudes and work behaviour.

To facilitate class discussion and your understanding of values and organizational culture, consider the following issues.

Source: The scale is from Hoffman, R., & Ruemper, F. (1997). *Organizational Behaviour: Canadian Cases and Exercises*, 3rd ed. Toronto: Captus Press.

1. How different are your values from the values of your organization, and what are the implications of this for your job attitudes and behaviour?
2. How can an understanding of the values that are most important to you assist in your decision to join an organization?
3. What are the implications for organizations that hire employees whose values differ from those of the organization, and what should they do about it?

## Case Incident

### The Reality Shock

Soon after starting his new job, Jason began to wonder about the challenging work he was supposed to be doing, the great co-workers he was told about, and the ability to attend training and development programs. None of these things seemed to be happening as he had expected. To make matters worse, he had spent most of the first month working on his own and reading about the organization's mission, history, policies, and so on. Jason was beginning to wonder if this was the right job and organization for him. He was feeling very dissatisfied and seriously thinking about quitting.

1. Explain how Jason's anticipatory socialization might be contributing to his disappointment and job attitudes. How might this situation have been prevented?
2. Given Jason's current situation, is there anything the organization can do to prevent him from quitting? Is there anything they should do so other new hires don't have the same experience as Jason?

## Case Study

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